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BEESTON COMMUNITY FORUM

Beeston Forum General Meeting - 1st February 2018 Agenda

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks
2. Apologies for absence
3. Ratification of new Neighbourhood Forum members
4. Guest Speakers
 - a) International Fun Fairs
 - b) Martin Wright, Leeds City Council
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Community Forum held on 4th January 2018
6. Police Report
7. Discussion about the Neighbourhood Plan
8. Proposal to rearrange the longer discussions about the Neighbourhood Forum
9. Report of the Committee meeting held on 18th January 2018
10. Correspondence
11. Possible Co-option of Committee members
12. Any Other Business

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeston Forum held on Thursday 4th January 2018

Attendance:- Christine Thornton (in the chair until she left the meeting – see minute 6.2) , Mr R. Bell (in the chair following the departure of Christine Thornton) , Mr. W.J. Birch, Mrs. J. Birch, Mr. K. Burton, Mrs. S. Burton, Mr. S. Casserley, Mrs. R. Casserley, Mrs. S. Clark, Mr. M. Clayton, Mr. J. Cunningham, Mr. M. Day, Mr. C. Hendrick Ward, Mr. K. Hewson, Mr. Y. Hussain, Mrs. A. Hussain, Miss P. Johnson, Mrs. P. Jones, Mr. A. Mhmood, Mrs. M. Munro, Mr. M. Parry, Rev L. Pearson, Mr. A. Scopes and Mr. R.J.W. Winfield

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks – Christine Thornton welcomed those present to the first meeting of 2018, and thanked those present for attending on an 'awful' night , although she noted that the wind had dropped and it is drying up.

2. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor David Congreve,, Brenda Draper, Councillor Angela Gabriel and Councillor Adam Ogilvie

3. Ratification of Neighbourhood Forum members-It was noted that Mark Clayton had been elected to the committee of the Beeston Community Forum at the Forum AGM the previous month. Robert Winfield noted that it would be sensible for him to be elected to the Committee of the Beeston Neighbourhood Forum as the two committees almost always meet together .However, Mark Clayton was not a member of the Neighbourhood Forum. He agreed to accept nomination as a member and it was agreed to ratify his membership

4. Guest Speaker. Christine Thornton introduced the guest speaker, Rt. Hon Hilary Benn, MP

4.1 Hilary Benn thanked the Forum for its invitation and wished those present a Happy New Year. He hoped that 2018 is better in some respects than 2017 , and lives in hope that things will improve . He apologised for not attending the Forum meeting in September, as originally invited , because the Forum meeting coincided with the first day of debate on the EU Withdrawal Bill . He has spent time dealing with Brexit, as he was re elected as Chairman of the Select Committee dealing with Exiting the EU following the General Election . He is taking up a lot of time dealing with this important issue. He would be happy to deal with this, and other issues in the Question and Answer session .He would comment briefly on two local and one national issues.

4.2 Hilary Benn welcomed the steps taken to establish a liaison group between the forum, other groups and Aspiring Communities , which he regarded as a positive step following the decision of the Planning Inspector to grant planning permission for the proposed development. He added that it is very significant that this is taking place

4.3 Hilary Benn referred to the managed area for prostitutes in Holbeck. He noted that there would be a residents meeting about this matter on 16th January . Hilary Benn has made it clear to Leeds City Council and the Police that the terms of the managed area must be abided by. This is not currently the case . He noted that there had been a lively meeting at St. Matthews two or three months ago , and that the police had formed a dedicated group of officers dealing with the managed area. The team has a dedicated telephone number which people can use to report things which are happening which should not happen. He noted that this has been reported by South Leeds Life and took the opportunity to thank Jeremy Morton and his team for an excellent publication. Hilary Benn added that the test is whether the terms of the managed zone are being abided by, particularly by the prostitutes. He added that the message had been got by Leeds City Council and its environmental officers to clean up areas around businesses.

4.4 Hilary Benn referred to the state of the National Health Service . He had recently visited St James's Hospital , and doctors had told him that half of all planned operations had been cancelled, and more people, particularly the elderly and frail , were coming into Accident and Emergency . Conditions such as trips, falls and flu are creating a strain on the system. Hilary Benn thanked NHS staff for working flat out . Staff are working to persuade people who are in no urgent need of medical attention not to turn up at Accident and Emergency. However , a number of people are not registered with a doctor, or are waiting for a long time to speak to a doctor. This must be addressed. This problem is more acute in certain areas of the city where older GPs are retiring and it is difficult to find replacements. Hilary Benn added that there is an issue of funding. We need spending on the NHS and social care and the two are interlinked . He added that at Leeds General Infirmary and St James's Hospital people remain in beds when there is no need of this, for want of necessary support outside. Hilary Benn added that on a previous visit to St James's Hospital doctors had told him that this situation backs up throughout the system. Last year,the winter crisis lasted until the Spring . Hilary Benn said that we must find a way of integrating health and social care , and give the NHS the funding which it needs . Hilary Benn noted that demand for healthcare is going up , and funding is not keeping pace . There are more people and they are living longer. There are more complex health treatments, and more drugs. All these involve additional costs and expense. Hilary Benn noted that he had signed an all party letter to the Prime Minister which had been co-ordinated by Dr Sarah Wollaston MP , the Chairman of the Health Select Committee , suggesting that politicians meet on an all party basis to solve issues relating to Health and Social care . Our grandparents, then our parents , then ourselves will need health and assistance. There is a shared interest in finding a solution

4.5 The meeting then opened up to questions and comments from the floor . John Cunningham noted that the former Harry Booth House is used for people coming out of hospital and we need a few more places like that . Hilary Benn agreed with this comment and noted that he visited Harry Booth house three or four years ago , and noted that it provides for people who have no need to stay in hospital , but cannot go home. This is intermediate care and gives time for conditions at home to be assessed. The fundamental problem is one of funding . The budgets of councils are being cut . Increasing needs for social care and looking after children cannot wait for funding ; spending needs to be increased now. Hilary Benn noted that we have seen facilities close. Whilst the NHS has had more money, this is not keeping pace with demand .The issue is how you manage the transition , have fewer people in hospital , and know that elderly people can be moved quickly when there is no medical need to be in hospital. How this transition is to be funded is tricky . Leeds City Council and the NHS are all in this together

4.6 Christine Thornton asked whether there will be an improvement if social care is managed in the same way as healthcare, and noted that bedblocking is a problem . Hilary Benn said that there would be an improvement if healthcare is managed in the same way as social care. He noted that the old need care and that if someone breaks a leg or is depressed , they are still the same human being even though they have difficult circumstances . He noted that there is an overwhelming argument for integration and asked whether health

and social care would be separate if we are designing a system today. The argument for an integrated budget and system is overwhelming. Hilary Benn noted that he had visited a team of District nurses and other community staff who had been placed in the same room as social workers. Formerly, they used to send faxes to one another. Now they are sat in the same room, they are more effective. They are in the same place dealing with the same people. Once they started doing this, they asked why they were not doing this before. Managerial changes can have no effect, but this one did. Hilary Benn referred to Aneira Thomas, who was the first baby born under the NHS on 1st January 1948. He noted that in the run up to the birth, midwives were looking at the clock and told her mother to stop pushing. Hilary Benn noted that her Christian name, Aneira, is the female version of Aneurin, after Aneurin Bevan, the founder of the NHS. She noted that it had been an honour to be named after the person who established the NHS.

4.7 Richard Bell observed that from the outside looking in, it makes you wonder why things cannot happen quickly. If it is obvious, why can't it happen? He noted that he had recently received a referral letter from a doctor setting out options for visiting times. He noted that it was not possible for him to book an appointment on the internet, and had to attempt to arrange an appointment by telephone. He contacted Dewsbury Hospital, where it was stated that the anticipated waiting time was 40 days. When he phoned, he was told that the waiting time would be 20 weeks. A member of staff at the surgery could have arranged this appointment, but Richard Bell had wasted two hours on the telephone. He said that this is nonsense, but he wondered whether we would fix this, particularly as a solution is driven from a political perspective. Hilary Benn said that this will only work if the computer interface works and has accurate information about waiting times. Time spent by doctors in dealing with appointments is not time spent dealing with patients. He noted that on a visit to Accident and Emergency earlier in the year, managers were looking carefully at what they could do to reduce delays. In fact, St James's Hospital has increased the number of senior doctors and reduced the number of junior doctors, as senior doctors are able to give the go ahead for treatment and discharge. The Accident and Emergency Department had proposed this, as it was reducing waiting times. Myra Munro pointed out that the appointments system works, but she had to do it on the telephone. Sandra Burton also pointed out that the appointments system works. Rosemary Casserley said that Administrative staff carried out the process of booking an appointment for her. She was advised that it would be better for her if she saw a different person on a different day. Hilary Benn noted that he had been sent a text reminder of his appointment. He noted that hospitals must deal with 'no shows' where patients fail to turn up for appointments. Sandra Burton said that people failing to turn up for appointments is disgusting and annoys her. The person involved could easily have made a phone call to cancel the appointment. Hilary Benn noted that in such circumstances, the hospital could have seen more patients, but he also noted that in the absence of a reminder, the patient might forget about the appointment. Stuart Casserley said that the time between booking an appointment and the actual appointment might be so long that the patient has recovered and no longer requires the appointment. Hilary Benn felt that if a patient has recovered by the time of the appointment, it is far better to phone the GP's surgery, which might not otherwise be aware that the patient has recovered. Hilary Benn stressed that users of the NHS have a responsibility too. Myra Munro said that fines should be imposed on patients who fail to turn up for appointments without cancelling them; however Hilary Benn said that he would oppose this. A member of the audience noted that the NHS is adapting to changing times and is catching up. Hilary Benn said that this is an important point which he had been discussing in his office. In the past, there were circumstances in which doctors had to apologise for the fact that nothing could be done. Nowadays, people in similar circumstances are likely to turn up to their appointment with a print out, and ask 'what about this treatment or drug'. Patients are less deferential and there is a different relationship between doctors and patients. Not all doctors find this easy, but this is the world as it is. A doctor could say that this treatment does not work, or that a treatment might have adverse effects. Hilary Benn pointed out that the NHS Choices website is excellent for looking up symptoms, although he does not advocate self diagnosis. It is possible to phone 111. Hilary Benn recalled that he had fallen in the bath and broke four ribs and sustained a bruised lung. He had been back at St James's hospital earlier in the day in relation to this injury. He had originally been advised to go to Accident and Emergency. Medical advice is more available than it has been in the past, which is progress. Hilary Benn said that we need a different NHS. He noted that the recent coverage of computer algorithms are supposed to be better than some doctors as it is possible to spot some diseases from X rays and scans. This process can result in a referral to a doctor. Hilary Benn noted that there is growing demand for the NHS and we will see technology develop. He added that conditions which were untreatable thirty years ago are now treatable. People are living older and expect to remain healthy.

4.8 Bill Birch noted that he often visits Holbeck Club on Wednesdays and said that the managed zone for prostitutes is not working. He said that the basis for this is philosophically wrong. He said that no man should buy and sell a woman's body. A lot of the prostitutes have a bad drug habit and are not in control of themselves. Pimps are sending them out and the managed area is turning into a meet and greet area sponsored by the council. Sex in the street is going on all over Holbeck including in a telephone kiosk close to St Matthews. The managed zone is, he says, the wrong initiative in the wrong place. This fundamentally cannot work as the prostitutes require treatment. They need to be helped off the street. Prostitutes do not just have sex within the managed area, but throughout Holbeck, in Beeston Hill and even in Beeston. Hilary Benn said that the problem had been present for a long time and noted that prostitution had been described as 'the oldest profession in the world'. He recalled that fifteen years ago, he had gone out for a night with the police who knew a number of the prostitutes. All except one of the prostitutes involved admitted to having a drug or drink habit. He noted that there are two groups of prostitutes; the group in which drug or drink habits are commonplace, and a more recent group of people from Eastern Europe. It is not clear that prostitutes from this group have a drink or drug problem. Hilary Benn noted that there are police guidelines on the prosecution of prostitutes. There are different offences for men and women involved in prostitution. Selling a body is not a criminal act. However, if prostitutes are fined, they simply get back on the street to earn money to pay the fine, to feed their drug habit, or to pay their pimp. This, therefore does not work. However, if a potential solution might work, it should be given a go. The managed area is an attempt to get prostitution out of residential areas. This is a worthy object, but it has not worked. There are also difficult consequences for businesses in the managed zone. Hilary Benn noted that he has had some complaints about the safety of staff leaving places of work at the end of the day. People had wrongly believed that they are prostitutes.

Hilary Benn, however said that there is no easy answer to this problem and that if the managed area is abolished, prostitution would continue, but would it be managed? . If enforcement of the managed zone is increased, activity would increase as there would be a need to pay the fines imposed . A number of the prostitutes are controlled by pimps. Hilary Benn noted that there had been an event at the House of Commons before Christmas campaigning against the criminalisation of prostitution and in favour of legalised brothels . Hilary Benn said that the current situation is clearly not acceptable . Sex in the middle of the street or in a car is not acceptable. He noted that the managed zone is intended to apply at night time when no one is around. If the managed zone is not enforced, it will not enjoy public confidence. The police and Leeds City Council are on a short order notice that the managed zone must be enforced with consequences for those breaking the rules. Bill Birch said that the issue is a social welfare issue . Prostitutes who are on drugs and have been sent out by pimps need care ; they must not be in thrall of people. He added that all that is necessary is for the police to go to the areas of Holbeck where kerbcrawlers are driving around Holbeck and take their registration numbers. Hilary Benn said there are organisations working with the prostitutes. He noted that many of the prostitutes do not know another life and do not know how to escape. It would take a lot of courage to report a pimp. It is difficult to imagine how people get into this position. Richard Bell said that the consideration for the prostitutes is perceived as insulting by local residents who get threatened and have to pick up used condoms. We are paying a price for procrastination. Mark Day noted that we still have an issue . If we get prostitutes of the streets , a new load of prostitutes may come along . He noted that there is a model in Sweden or Finland and suggested targeting men involved with prostitution. Hilary Benn said that the evidence is that attempts to eliminate the trade have not worked . The police have said that prostitutes are more likely to report attacks on them than in the past . A man has recently been charged with an attack on a prostitute , but such offences are difficult to prove because this is often one person's word against another. He said that prostitution should be put into safer places not in the street. There is a moral social and political question as to the right approach to take .

4.9 Richard Bell referred to what he described as hypocrisy in politics. He noted that Leeds City Council has refused a drinks licence to Winstons , but everyone knows what goes on there. He added that Holbeck is a bazaar for criminality. Christine Thornton said that this issue had developed since Holbeck Urban Village was developed . She noted that residents of Holbeck Urban Village jump up and down and are listened to. Richard Bell referred to what he said are hypocrisy and lies in Leeds City Council. They say they do everything they can , and would speak in around month's time. They then forget the issue . Hilary Benn said that he does not quite take that view and that those in authority should get the message. Richard Bell noted that he has seen photographs of used condoms. Christine Thornton said that she has found used condoms in her garden which adjoins Cross Flatts Park. She noted that people should take their rubbish away. Colin Hendrick Ward said that any scheme must be managed . If a building with 1000 beds was built, prostitutes would move into it. Hilary Benn noted that those involved in prostitution are on drugs. The issue is how to get them off drugs. He noted that in the past, he was the Prisons Minister , and noted that many people are in prison due to a drug habit. He has met people who have kicked the habit. He recalled meeting a prisoner in Lewes Prison who expressed a determination not to go back on drugs when released . Hilary Benn noted that this attitude needs strength , and added that he often wondered what happened to this prisoner. He added that it is no use talking to someone with a hard drug habit , as they are likely to be still on drugs next month and next year. All they think about is the next fix. Richard Bell noted that coming off drugs is difficult as the buzz is so great.

4.10 Pauline Johnson wondered whether Hilary Benn is better following the accident which he described earlier in the meeting. Hilary Benn said that he is on the mend and noted that the world divides into those who have broken ribs and those who have not! He thanked Pauline Johnson for asking the question.

4.11 Pauline Johnson had heard that there has been a debate in the House of Commons about possible tighter restrictions on fireworks . She noted that this year, there had been fireworks on three nights around bonfire night and noted that her cat is frightened by the noise of fireworks , in particular the high pitched whistle. She wondered whether shops selling fireworks should be required to be licensed, in the same way as alcohol licences are required , and that shops should be required to obtain fireworks from a reputable source. Hilary Benn noted that there are restrictions on where fireworks can be bought, and who they can be sold to . However, he receives fewer complaints relating to fireworks than he did ten years ago . This appears to be less of a problem than in the past due to the restrictions . There are always people acting irresponsibly . There are also more organised displays, which Hilary Benn said is fantastic . Myra Munro said that she had found a very large firework box which had been discarded close to Cross Flatts Park . She had never seen anything like this before. John Cunningham noted that he had heard fireworks being discharged at 3 am . Richard Bell had heard fireworks at 3 am on Boxing Day morning. Myra Munro said there had been fireworks every weekend between bonfire night and the end of the year. Hilary Benn said that discharging fireworks at 3 am is clearly Anti Social Behaviour, and wondered whether the problem has got worse. Pauline Johnson said that the problem is dreadful and that people had been putting fireworks in bins in the past. She noted that cats can hear noises at a higher pitch than humans and that this is a source of distress to them . She had lost a previous cat as a result of an incident involving a firework, and will not allow her cat to go out when fireworks are being discharged. The problem has got worse. Christine Thornton noted that fireworks are discharged at New Year too , but this does not go on for too long after midnight .

4.12 Rosemary Casserley said that there is more and more anti social behaviour in Beeston , including cars parking on pavements , the discharge of fireworks, prostitutes and muggings . If you try to talk to the police, they say there is no point in them coming out. The police are less active than they used to be . She has heard that there are people going around in cars with airguns, and joyriders driving cars at 70mph. No one bats an eyelid. The police are down there , but if they are on a certain job, they say they are not attending . She felt that the police do not have the time or the inclination to complete paperwork . The police should say that if a person reporting crime has proof, they will come out. Christine Thornton said that residents should be more proactive in reporting crime, perhaps speeding cars. Pam Jones said that when issues are reported to the police, they are not taken far as there is so much administration.

This includes simple things such as a broken window. She added that she frequently sees two PCSOs walking along the opposite side of the road. Hilary Benn noted that the last time he visited Beeston Primary School, parking was a big issue, as there is a large number of pupils and only limited parking as parents bring their children to the school. Pam Jones said that the issue is not just parking but how people get there. The bus turning circle is frequently used as a drop off point. She noted that a CCTV camera had been put up for one day and suggested that if it had been there for longer the courts would have been full! Hilary Benn said that if there are concerns, these can be raised with himself and the councillors. He suggested that the police could be asked to be at a particular place to dissuade criminal activity. Pam Jones said that the police should spend a week at particular locations as people would then think they are serious. She had seen people tearing up notices and noted that local residents were helpless. She noted that this minor criminality takes place in front of children. Hilary Benn said that if a fixed penalty ticket is torn up, those involved can be pursued through the courts for non payment of the fine. Pam Jones said that maybe the police are taking the view that they will get peoples' backs up if they do anything. Hilary Benn noted that there are fewer police. However, if people are robbed in the street, they will take a great interest. If a crime is in progress they will turn up. In relation to joyriders, Hilary Benn said that judging by his postbag, this has been a big problem in the past, but less so now. Richard Bell noted that it is now more difficult to steal cars. Hilary Benn said that if there is an area where people are driving fast, he will ask people to deal with the problem, but inconsiderate parking on pavements is down to the community. He noted that people park on pavements in order to enable roads to function. Roads were built many years ago, and there are more cars now. We are relying on people to be reasonable. When they are not and endanger pedestrians, we would expect the police to do something. Rosemary Casserley said that we would need proof and number plates. Hilary Benn said that if the car can be identified, the police have a start. Important questions are who is driving the car, whether it is stolen, or has the owner of the car given it to someone else. The police will say that they need something to work on. Richard Bell noted that residents of St Anthony's Drive have parking permits, but people have always parked there as there is no enforcement. Most people are good and others are afraid of the consequences of doing wrong, whilst people who do not care will do the wrong thing. Institutions of authority have lost public space. Stuart Casserley said that Cockburn school suffers from the same problems which have already been described. Gipsy Lane is frequently nose to tail with cars. Teachers complain that cars are parking on footpaths. A police officer is based at the school but does nothing, even though the cars parking on the footpath are causing an obstruction. Stuart Casserley said that the owners of the cars concerned should be given a ticket. It was noted that it is illegal to drive on a pavement, but not to park on a pavement. Bill Birch noted that it is illegal to cause an obstruction.

4.13 Bill Birch referred to the proposals for the M621, all of which, he noted involve the closure of junction 2a. He noted that this proposal would result in traffic coming out of Leeds City Centre immediately joining the fast lane of the motorway. He also noted that it will no longer be possible to access Holbeck and Beeston from the slip road, and this would result in more traffic along Wesley Street. He also criticised Leeds City Council for narrowing Dewsbury Road; a possible alternative route. He said that there should be joined up thinking between Leeds City Council and Highways England. He noted that what is good for Leeds City Centre is not good for residents of Beeston, and that we are sacrificed. Hilary Benn noted that the Elland Road Park and Ride facility is not a white elephant., Bill Birch, however, said that either the Elland Road Park and Ride facility would prove to be a white elephant, or there would be more cars and therefore more pollution in Beeston. Hilary Benn said that there is less pollution than there would have been if there had been no Park and Ride facility, and that those occupying the cars had continued their ongoing journey in the cars. He added that Leeds has a pollution problem and that Leeds City Council is working on a pollution plan. The greatest amount of soot in Leeds occurs at the Corn Exchange. He noted that the technology will be developed which will enable us to get rid of petrol and diesel cars by 2040. However, Hilary Benn said he agrees with Bill Birch's remarks about the junction. He noted that he had been told about the proposal to close the junction and felt that he could not understand why it is impossible to get an extra lane. Richard Bell noted that coming from Stourton, it is argued that it is dangerous to expect drivers to cross two lanes of traffic. Hilary Benn said that if the slip road becomes a part of the motorway, there is a need to go back in again. He does not understand the funnelling of three lanes into two. Traffic would need to continue along Elland Road up onto Wesley Street. Bill Birch suggested getting the bridge to go onto the inside lane not the outside lane, and extend the bridge so that the junction could become a conventional junction. Robert Winfield noted that the Forum has objected to the proposal and that representatives of Highways England had attended the October Forum meeting (at which Bill Birch was regrettably unable to be present) to discuss the proposal. The discussion which took place is fully minuted and the minutes can be read in the November 2017 Agenda document, which is accessible on the Forum's website.

4.14 Rosemary Casserley noted that Leeds, in general is a big area, and that the main problem is the road system. She noted that a journey from Headingley to Beeston, which goes through the city centre involves stopping and starting repeatedly at hubs and traffic lights. The 20 mph zone is causing pollution. We need a free flowing system, rather than going around in circles. Traffic along the Ingram Distributor Road does move but traffic is nose to tail. Putting an extra lane in will not solve the problem of cars, nor of pollution. Hilary Benn said that there is no such thing as a free flowing system in a city of 750000 people. He cannot think of a city with a motorway as close to the city centre as Leeds has. There is no space for new roads and we have the road capacity which we have. People are coming in and out. He noted that there have been appeals to deal with rat running, and rat runs have been closed. He noted that Park and Ride is part of Leeds City Council's strategy to deal with the situation. There has also been consultation about forms of vehicle charging. He noted that London has introduced a new change, in addition to the congestion charge for older diesel vehicles. We either need to have fewer vehicles, or change those vehicles to those which do not cause pollution. We must get people out of cars and onto public transport. Hilary Benn noted that there is no rapid transit system in Leeds. The supertram system failed because of cost whilst the New Generation Transport proposal (trolleybus) was rejected by the inspector. Leeds is a major city and a major centre for the economy. It is ridiculous that there is no rapid transit system similar to those in Sheffield, Nottingham and Manchester. It might be possible to persuade investors to put money in to the system, run it for 30 years and retain the profits, but no

one will invest in a system if an inspector could block it. 100 years ago, when the railways and the underground were being built, people were simply told that it is happening. Today, people are less deferential and more likely to protest. He noted that HS2 is an attempt to upgrade our infrastructure, which is more difficult as we cannot please everyone, and we must be honest. He asked how we can get the change to come, and suggested that this is a combination of different things. Park and Ride is a contribution but only a small contribution as a large number of cars are still coming through. The council must do something but there is no easy answer. If traffic is free flowing, more people will come, and there will be more pollution.

4.15 Ash Mahmood said that there has been no real consultation with Leeds City Council and Highways England. He said that Dewsbury Road is now horrendous. He can understand the principle of cycle zones, but noted that people can get knocked over when getting off buses along Dewsbury Road. He noted that he frequently travels to Harehills and Chapeltown and traffic is horrendous. There is no real consultation and we are forced to live with changes. The present situation is a nightmare for people living in the local area; for example, traffic is half way down Tempest Road at 3pm. It was also noted that there is traffic along Wesley Street for 15 to 20 minutes and three changes of traffic lights are required to get through. Hilary Benn acknowledged that cycle lanes are not popular as they take up road space, but if people can get out of their car to cycle, this will reduce pollution. Pollution is a hidden danger and we have a responsibility to address this.

5. The minutes of the Forum meeting on 2nd November 2017 were accepted as a fair and accurate record of the meeting

6. Matter Arising –

6.1 A discussion took place about the venue for Forum meetings. Aneela Hussain noted that at the Forum AGM the previous month, the members had heard a speech from the Lord Mayor in which she referred to the aim of making Leeds great in diversity, and coming together as a community. She argued that the present venue for Forum meetings is not inclusive, and looking around the meeting, she felt that those in attendance are not a full representation of Beeston. She said that the Forum should consider holding meetings at another venue, because of objections from the muslim community to holding meetings on licensed premises. Christine Thornton noted that the Forum has been going for 17 or 18 years, and meetings have been held in the present venue only for the past few months. People raising this issue had not attended Forum meetings previously, although she noted that Ash Mahmood had attended Forum meetings as a result of his connection with Aspiring Communities. Christine Thornton noted that the Forum had given the committee a mandate to decide on the temporary venue for Forum meetings during the redevelopment of Beeston Village Community and had decided that meetings would be held at the present venue. Rev Lindsey Pearson noted that she had heard that there had been a delay in the building of the replacement Beeston Village Community Centre. Robert Winfield noted that, as members of the Committee, but probably not other members of the Forum were aware, he had been ill in the fortnight leading up to Christmas. He had been invited by Health for All (Leeds) to a Christmas fuddle at which details were to have been given about the progress of the development. Robert Winfield noted that as a result of his illness, he had been compelled to present apologies from the event, but had been assured that Toshal Bhatia of Health for All (Leeds) would email him with a progress report about the development in the early days of the New Year. He had not yet received this, but also noted that it is only four days into the New Year. Lindsey Pearson noted that there was no sign of any new building going up, and recalled that the only reason for not using St. Mary's Church was the cost. Christine Thornton pointed out that the committee had taken the decision to use the Old White Hart function room. Bill Birch recalled that Lindsey Pearson had said that she could not hire St Mary's Church at the same price which we had been paying for Beeston Village Community Centre, and that the Old White Hart was available at no cost. Robert Winfield noted that we had been paying £20 per month for the use of Beeston Village Community Centre. He noted that in the committee discussion about possible venues, it was noted that we would only require a venue once per month. It was noted that if we were to book St Mary's Church once per month, it would make it impossible for a group requiring the venue every Thursday to book. Additionally, Robert Winfield noted that the Forum is somewhat low on funds, and the hiring of a venue at any cost would require the Forum to secure funding. Ash Mahmood noted that he had attended Forum meetings for two to three years in connection with the Aspiring Communities planning application. He noted that the ward councillors had made it clear that money is available, but the Forum had chosen not to apply. He noted that at the meeting at St Mary's Church organised by Aspiring Communities on December 10th, number of people had spoken to him about their reservations about attending meetings at the current venue. They had said that they would like to attend Forum meetings but for the stigma associated with being in a pub. Bill Birch said that there had been a lot of talk from the Asian community about integration but he doesn't see any. He added that anyone knows that the women muslims coming to the venue for a Forum meeting have not come for a drink. We know

that and they know that . He felt that this is an opportunity to resist the bigoted people placing pressure on them not to attend meetings. He added that Forum members know why they are coming to the venue , and it is not for a drink. Ash Mahmood said that the culture of the Asian community is hostile to entering pubs and the present venue for forum meetings is linked to a pub. The majority of people do not understand the situation. For the community outside , this is a problem. Bill Birch said that for the eight months during which meetings will take place at the present venue , someone in the Asian Community has the chance to break the stigma. He asked Ash Mahmood whether he can convince the Asian community to break the stigma

6.2 Christine Thornton said that after the Forum AGM she felt that she had been personally attacked for holding meetings in the pub. She had said that if this carries on, she would stand down as the Chairman of the Forum. She added that she cannot carry on this conversation every single meeting. Christine Thornton then left the meeting. Richard Bell took the chair for the remainder of the meeting .

6.3 Colin Hendrick Ward noted that the stated aim of Aspiring Communities is to advance, engage and integrate. He said that everything they do is diametrically opposed to that . He noted that the Beeston Community Forum only has around £100 in funds and added that all we are asking for is to engage and integrate for a short period of time. He added that the community comes before belief . Upon the completion of the new Beeston Village Community Centre , we would move to a new venue which is secular and open to all . If people are entrenched, there is an issue. A member of the audience noted that the image is of people who 'might want a drink' . This , he said was not an issue; the issue is setting foot in an unusual environment. Colin Hendrick Ward hoped it would be possible to get as many people from the muslim community to meetings as possible. He suggested that those muslims who are present at the meeting are not bothered . He would like to see more muslims as they are a part of the community . Aneela Hussain said that she appreciates the issue relating to money from a practical point of view , and noted that no alcohol is permitted in the meeting even though it is in a pub . However religion inhibits people from coming. Richard Bell said that although he respects the viewpoints which have been put forward, people are excluding themselves . He noted that engagement with muslims was not great . People had not come to meetings when the venue was not an issue . If we were to take a decision to move the venue now, people would say that it is because Asians stole the agenda and made us move. A member of the audience noted that if he look around he feels that it is an injustice that the whole community is not represented. He wondered how he could help the Forum . He suggested that the Forum can then move forward . One part of the community, he noted, has never come before but would now like to make a contribution to help the Forum's work and to make a contribution to help, work and live together . He is a strong believer in working together . He noted that he runs a profitable business and could help the Forum with the cost for any venue . Richard Bell noted that the Forum runs on the basis of small donations an the proceeds of sale of raffle tickets. A member of the audience wondered whether he could raise money for the Forum. Robert Winfield said that he could understand Christine Thornton's frustration at the situation which had been developed. He noted that the issue of the venue had been raised at virtually every meeting since meetings moved to the Old White Hart Function Room, even though it had been made clear that the decision had been taken. Robert Winfield noted that the bar in the function room is closed during Forum meetings and Christine Thornton had made it clear that she was unwilling to allow alcohol to be brought into the meeting. Robert Winfield added that he has drunk no alcohol for well over 20 years and that Christine Thornton drinks no alcohol. He suggested that there could be a vote at the present meeting as to whether meetings continue at the present venue , or seek an alternative venue, with the proviso that if the meeting decides to continue at the present venue , there is no further discussion of the matter unless there is a substantial change in circumstances. Ash Mahmood suggested that a vote could be taken amongst a body comprising members of the Committee and people who would like to attend the Forum. Mark Clayton wondered why the members of the Asian Community present do not wish to stand for the committee . Ash Mahmood pointed out that his connection with Aspiring Communities might be an issue. Robert Winfield understood that Ash Mahmood is a resident of Tempest Road which is outside the area covered by the Beeston Community Forum so he would not be eligible to join the Beeston Community Forum Committee; however he would be able to join the Neighbourhood Forum, and become a member of the committee on the basis that he works in Beeston. Richard Bell said that it would not be appropriate to vote on whether Forum meetings remain at the present venue or whether the Forum should seek an alternative venue.

7. Police Report. It was noted that no representative of the police was present . Bill Birch noted that there had been a number of crimes in and around Beeston, notably a stolen car set on fire in the Buckdens, key safes had been smashed and entry gained to two OAPs ' homes in Cleveleys Court, a burglary on Green Lane, a dash camera stolen from a car in Beeston, a person had been attacked in a home in Barkly Terrace after a brick had been put through the window, an OAP had been assaulted in his own home in Holbeck in order to steal his car , and a young man had been robbed near the M621 in Holbeck. Bill Birch said that we want some answers about these crimes. Robert Winfield noted that at the last committee meeting , there had been a discussion about an exchange of e mails between Adam Cooper and the office of the West Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner. The committee felt that the police were not enforcing the law properly and had resolved to seek a meeting with the police to discuss the issue. Robert Winfield noted that he had not yet written the relevant letter because of the period of ill health which he referred to earlier in the meeting and his wish to take a break from Forum activities over the Christmas/New Year period. The meeting agreed to a proposal from Robert Winfield that Hilary Benn be copied into the letter .

8. Report of the Committee Meeting held on 27th November 2017. Robert Winfield noted that in addition to the exchange of e mails involving Adam Cooper , there had been a discussion about preparations for the Beeston Community Forum AGM, and the Neighbourhood Planning Workshop which had been held at the Forum meeting on 2nd November.

9. Correspondence- Robert Winfield had received an we mail from Craig Shackleton of Leeds City Council explaining that they had received an enquiry from a large touring circus company to use the Fullerton Car Park area of land at Elland Road , and just wondered whether this would be something that the Beeston residents/ community would be supportive of in principle and /or have any immediate concerns. The proposed dates of operation for the circus are Thursday 24th May to Sunday 3rd June. Richard Bell noted that these arrangements are similar to the Valentine Fair which causes no issues. It was agreed to invite representatives to a future Forum meeting .

10. Any Other Business.

10.1 Robert Winfield noted that the Forum committee had decided to dispense with the December committee meeting. He noted that he had sent a number of suggestions for guest speakers during 2018 to committee members. He was anxious to hear from committee members as to whether this list is acceptable . The meeting agreed to a proposal from Robert Winfield that we issue our usual invitation to Stewart Robinson of International Fun Fairs and Martin Wright of Leeds City Council to speak about the Valentine Fair at Elland Road at the February meeting (before the fair) and the March meeting (after the fair)

10,2 Robert Winfield noted that the minutes for the Forum meeting had been produced in 12 point font following an e mail discussion amongst committee members initiated by Steve Francis . He added that the print size for the minutes which are published on the internet can be increased by holding down the Ctrl key on the computer keyboard and pressing + . In case anyone wishes to reduce the print size , this can be done by holding down the Ctrl key and pressing - .